

Message Text

SECRET

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NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PBOR PEPR IS EG US
SUBJ: SHIMON PERES AND THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

1. AT LUNCHEON TODAY, AUGUST 1, SHIMON PERES SAID HE
VERY MUCH HOPED TO HAVE A PRIVATE TALK
WITH YOU WHILE YOU WERE IN JERUSALEM. I SAID I WAS
SURE WE COULD ARRANGE SOMETHING SOMETIME SUNDAY.

2. PERES GAVE ME A LOT OF SENSITIVE DETAIL ABOUT HIS
PRIVATE TALK WITH SADAT IN VIENNA, SOME OF WHICH HE
SAID HE HAD NOT REPORTED TO ANYONE IN ISRAEL. HE WAS
EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE RISK OF VIOLATING SADAT'S
CONFIDENCE, AND ASKED ME NOT TO REPORT WHAT HE WAS
TELLING ME. WE AGREED THAT PERHAPS THE BEST THING WOULD
BE FOR HIM TO TALK TO YOU DIRECTLY DURING YOUR VISIT
ABOUT THE MORE SENSITIVE ITEMS. THE BOTTOM LINE REMAINS
HIS CONVICTION THAT AN AGREEMENT WITH SADAT REMAINS
POSSIBLE, BUT ONLY ON THE BASIS OF A DECLARATION OF
PRINCIPLES SIMILAR TO THAT DOCUMENT ISSUED AT VIENNA.
HE THINKS WE ARE MAKING A DREADFUL MISTAKE IN PURSUING
THE DETAILS OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA WITH SADAT, A
COURSE WHICH HE FEELS CERTAIN CAN NEVER LEAD TO ANY

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RESULT.

3. PERES IS CONVINCED THAT YOU SHOULD PUT IT VERY
STRAIGHT TO BEGIN PRIVATELY WHEN YOU ARE HERE THAT THE
CHANCES OF PEACE ARE TEETERING IN THE BALANCE AND THAT
ONLY A STATESMAN-LIKE DECISION BY BEGIN TO AGREE TO A
GENERAL DECLARATION CAN PRODUCE RESULTS. WITH SUCH A

DECLARATION, PERES IS PERSUADED THAT SADAT WILL THEN GO AHEAD TO A SINAI SETTLEMENT, AT LEAST TO AGREEMENT AND INITIALLING IF NOT TO FINAL SIGNATURE. HE OF COURSE DEPLORES THE MOST RECENT EVENTS AND THE MISHANDLING OF THE "EL-ARISH GESTURE" BY THE GOVERNMENT. HE STILL THINKS A GESTURE OF SOME KIND WOULD HELP A GREAT DEAL TO GET SADAT OFF THE HOOK AND TO GET HIM TO AGREE TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS FOR SEVERAL MORE MONTHS. HE SAYS HE HAS A FEW IDEAS ABOUT SUCH GESTURES, BUT HE HAD NO MORE ANSWER THAN I DO TO THE BASIC PROBLEM OF HOW TO GET BEGIN TO CONSIDER GESTURES RATHER THAN STRICT "QUID PRO QUO."

4. PERES SAYS THAT A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES ALONG THE LINE OF THE VIENNA DOCUMENT COULD BE PUT BEFORE THE KNESSET BY A GROUP OF DEPUTIES FROM DIFFERENT PARTIES AND WOULD ATTRACT MAJORITY KNESSET SUPPORT, IF BEGIN CONTINUED TO RESIST THE IDEA. JUST HOW ALL THIS WOULD THEN PLAY OUT IN DOMESTIC POLITICAL TERMS, HOWEVER, WAS CONSIDERABLY LESS CLEAR. I ASSUME BEGIN WOULD MAKE IT A FORMAL ISSUE CONFIDENCE IN HIS GOVERNMENT, AND THEREFORE ONE COULD NOT OBTAIN A KNESSET VOTE ON THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE ALONE. ON SUCH A CONFIDENCE VOTE, BEGIN WOULD WIN.

5. IT WILL BE WORTH YOUR WHILE TO HEAR PERES OUT, EVEN
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THOUGH YOUR MAIN TARGET HERE IS OBVIOUSLY BEGIN. LEWIS

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NNN

Message Attributes

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